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MEETING OF THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, NOVEMBER 15, 1875.

REMARKS ON EXPLORATIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

By CHIEF JUSTICE DALY, LL. D., and MR. BAYARD TAYLOR.

Among those present were Mr. Cyrus W. Field, Rev. Dr. Adams; Peter Cooper, Hon. John Jay, late minister to Vienna; Simon Bernheimer, Rev. Dr. R. D. Hitchcock, Col. Thomas C. Acton, James W. Beekman, Francis A. Stout, Gen. George W. Cullum, Robert L. Stuart, S. B. Ruggles, Col. T. Bailey Myers, William Rensen, Walton W. Evans and W. H. H. Moore.

The meeting was called to order by Chief Justice Daly, and on motion the reading of the minutes and other routine business was dispensed with.

Mr. Samuel B. Ruggles offered a resolution to appoint a special committee of five members to examine and report at a future meeting of the Society upon the leading features of the Mississippi, the Amazon, the Ganges and other great rivers in their relation to the commerce of the globe. It was adopted.

Gen. George W. Cullum offered the following report:

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, }
NEW YORK, *December 13, 1876.* }

The committee of the Council of the American Geographical Society, Chief Justice Daly, president; Colonel Conkling and General Cullum, vice-presidents; to whom was referred the communication of Mr. James Orton on the exploration of the River Beni, in South America, have the honor to report the accompanying preamble and resolution for the approval of the Society:

Whereas, The opinion of the Society has been asked respecting the utility of an expedition to the River Beni, in South America, and the same having been referred to a committee for investigation, and the committee having reported, be it, therefore

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Society an exploration of the

Beni, the greater part of the course of which is unknown, the lower and principal portion never having been explored, is desirable, both in a geographical and commercial point of view; that as it is an important tributary of the great water system of South America, its exploration would be a valuable contribution to geographical knowledge, and as it flows through a very rich and productive country and would, should it prove to be navigable, open up that region to the commerce of the world, and be of especial advantage to the commerce of the United States; that its exploration, in the opinion of the Society, would entirely justify the very moderate expenditure requisite for the fitting out of such an expedition.

On motion, the resolutions were adopted.

CHIEF JUSTICE DALY'S ADDRESS.

Chief Justice Daly gave a description of the various exploring expeditions which, during the last quarter of a century, have imparted so much information respecting the great water system of Central Africa, the regions through which it flows, and the people that inhabit them, concluding with an account of Mr. Stanley's explorations and discoveries, which were explained upon a map constructed for the Society. He then described the part of Africa between the Victoria Nyanza and the eastern coast, extending from about the fifth degree of south latitude to the southern limits of Abyssinia. It is estimated to contain about 8,000,000 of people, composed of many tribes, the northern ones being known by the general name of Gallas — a fine physical race, who have always maintained their independence, and are spread over a large extent of country, but a small part of which had been explored. He said that to the missionaries Krapf, Rebmann, Wakefield and New, we owe whatever knowledge we at present possess of the interior of this part of Africa. It had been ascertained, through their explorations, that a great mountain range extends from the equator, and probably much further north, to about the fifth degree of south latitude, and that it is the most elevated mountain region, so far as known, in Africa. This range, he said, lay about midway between the Victoria Nyanza and the eastern coast, the highest points of it being the two lofty snow-crowned peaks of Kenia and Killimanjaro, which were over 18,000 feet in height. He described this whole region as remarkable for the sublimity of its scenery, the picturesqueness of its valleys and plains, its many rivers, its great fertility, and for its salubrity, being one of the healthiest parts of Africa. The portion lying between

the western slope of this mountain range and the Victoria Nyanza has never been explored by civilized men, although constantly traversed by Arab traders, there being several caravan routes to the Victoria Nyanza to the north of it.

The information collected by the missionaries Wakefield and New corresponds with that obtained by Mr. Stanley in his exploration of the eastern coast of the Victoria Nyanza. The country along the shores of the Victoria Nyanza, and far east of it toward the mountains, was reported to them to consist chiefly of fine, open, level tracts of meadow-land backed with forests, and as being well watered by numerous streams, and abounding in wild animals of every description. Mr. New, in his ascent of Killimanjaro, in 1863, ascertained that several streams run from the south of that mountain into a lake called Jipe that ran into the River Pangani, which empties upon the eastern coast about $5^{\circ} 20'$ south latitude; that a river also flows from the western slope of Killimanjaro in a westerly direction, about a degree south of the position of the Victoria Nyanza, which is called the Ngara-da-Erobet, or the Cold Water. Mr. New also ascertained that a very large river, called the Ngara-da-Vash, or Broad Water, flows from about the parallel of the latitude of Kenia, and a little west of the 36° of east longitude, and thence south-westerly, entering the Victoria Nyanza at its southern extremity, in about the locality where Stanley found the mouth of the Shimeeyu. Judge Daly pointed out this river as laid down on Mr. New's map, which was exhibited, and suggested that this might be the same river as the Duma, which is shown on Mr. Stanley's map, flowing from the west, uniting to form the Shimeeyu, the Duma on Stanley's map appearing to be a wide river.

The country between this great mountain range and watershed and the Victoria Nyanza is peopled by two great tribes, the Masai and the Wakawari, who are generally at war with each other. The Masai dwell nearest the lake; they are a nomadic people, with great herds of cattle, having a republican form of government, and noted for their fine physical forms, their energy, intrepidity, daring and remorseless cruelty. In the language of Mr. New, they are "the admiration and terror of the surrounding tribes."

The missionaries heard from the native traders of Lake Baringo, which Speke puts down in his map as connected with and closely adjoining the north-east portion of the Victoria Nyanza. Mr. Stanley, as he found no such lake, nor any thing indicating it, but merely that a portion of the country adjoining the Victoria Nyanza

was called Baringo, concluded that no such lake was connected with the Victoria Nyanza. Major Burton, in a recent letter to the *Geographical Magazine*, disputes this conclusion, and insists that Mr. Stanley has "not been successful in establishing the theory that Captain Speke's Victoria Nyanza is a lake, and not a lake region;" that the Lake Baringo of the missionaries Krapf, Wakefield and New, "is not to be disposed of by the chance words of a few blacks." Now, these missionaries never claimed that the Lake Baringo, of which they had heard, had any connection with the Victoria Nyanza. On the contrary, it is laid down in New's map of 1873 as an independent lake, with an outlet running north-west in the direction of the Nile, and exactly in the same way upon Dr. Krapf's map thirteen years previously, with its position more than a degree to the east of the Victoria Nyanza. It was Speke's idea, and, as it seems, Major Burton's, that it flowed into and formed part of the Victoria, and is so represented upon Speke's map. So far from Major Burton's authorities, the missionaries, therefore, sustaining him, there is nothing in their accounts to call in question the correctness of Mr. Stanley's conclusion. It was, moreover, gratuitous and ungenerous in this eminent traveler and geographer to suggest that Mr. Stanley knew nothing evidently of Lake Baringo except what he found in Speke's map. The last time that Mr. Stanley was at my house he spent the whole evening in reading all that could be found about this region of Eastern Africa, even in so old an author as Purchas, and as Mr. New's book, the most important one, was published only three years ago, he, in all probability, has read it. Lake Baringo may possibly be connected with the large body of water which Colonel Long found in descending the Nile, although the general impression among geographers is that what he saw was not a permanent lake, but simply a temporary overflow of the river in that locality. As stated at our last meeting, my impression is, in the present state of my knowledge, that the great mountain land I have referred to, and its western and south-western slopes, is the remote and chief source of the waters which create those great reservoirs of the Nile, the Victoria and the Albert Nyanza. This was the belief of ancient geographers, and it is my conviction that they knew much more about this region than has commonly been supposed. Allowing for the general mistake which Ptolemy is known to have made in his southern latitudes, which were about eight degrees too far south, and taking his longitude as it is given in Agathodæmon's map, Ptolemy's Mountains of the Moon, as he indicated them, lay east of the Victoria Nyanza,

and south of it, exactly in the same position where the great mountain range to which I have referred extends and terminates. That these lofty and snow-covered mountains supplied the fountains which were the ultimate source of the Nile, and are also the cause of the phenomena of the annual inundation of the river in the summer throughout its whole course through Egypt, was put forth as a theory as early, at least, as the fifth century before Christ. The Nile, as it does still, swelled in the summer, and overflowed for a hundred days every part of the valley of Egypt, when it retired, and continued low throughout the winter. The Greeks, who guessed at truths which modern investigation alone has finally established, made one of those magnificent guesses as the cause of this inundation. Thales, even before the period mentioned, declared that the etesian winds were the cause of the inundation of the Nile. Anaxagoras and Democrates declared that these were northern or rather north-eastern winds which blow during winter over the valley of Egypt, without depositing upon the land of Egypt or upon the desert beyond it any part of the moisture with which they are freighted in the north. Those early geographers also in some way got the information that there was a region of snow in Ethiopia. Their theory was that these etesian or cold northern winds, which blow over Egypt in winter and spring, are condensed when they come in contact with the lofty mountain ranges of Ethiopia, and descend from the western slopes of those mountains in great torrents, which fill the great reservoirs of the Nile, and as the snows melt under the strong equatorial heat of summer, the waters of Ethiopia were by these means greatly augmented in that season of the year, and that this caused the annual swelling of the Nile. Herodotus was well informed of this theory, but he would not believe that snow-covered mountains could exist in the hot region of the torrid zone, and he therefore rejected it, like the eminent English geographer Mr. Cooley, who would not believe that the missionaries Krapf and Rebmann had seen the peaks of Kenia and Killimanjaro covered with snow until Baron Von Decken afterward not only saw the snowy peak of Killimanjaro, but also three avalanches descending its snowy sides.

Since our last meeting one of our associates, Mr. Merriam, has sent me a passage from Pausanias, which would seem to indicate that the Albert Nyanza was known in that writer's time, which was in the second century of our era. The passage is this: "Many of the Greeks or Egyptians who have penetrated into Ethiopia and to Meroe of the Ethiopians, declare that the Nile flows into a lake and *passes*

on through and out of this, as if it came from the dry land (or river banks), and thence running through lower Ethiopia and into Egypt empties into the sea at Pharos." It is mentioned by Mr. New that he found that the River Tana, which has its outlet in the Indian ocean, about $2^{\circ} 8'$ south latitude, and is the principal stream of that portion of the East African coast, overflows its banks in the summer season, deluging the whole country around its mouth, while the other rivers on the same part of the coast, such as the Ozér and Sabakei, retain their natural beds, experiencing no change. This phenomenon and the direction from whence the river ran, led him to conclude that this river had its source in the snowy region of Mount Kenia, and that it was the melting of the snows there under the great equatorial heat of the summer which produced this phenomenon. If this occurs on the eastern slopes, why may it not occur on the western slopes of the mountain chain lying between the Victoria Nyanza and the Indian ocean, and be, as those ancient geographers asserted, one of the causes of the great annual overflow of water at the fountain-head of the Nile, and the cause of the phenomena of its inundation in summer along the whole Egyptian valley. Mr. Stanley has found the remote southern source of the Victoria Nyanza to be the River Luamberri, which rises in an elevated table-land about 36° longitude, 5° south latitude, about the place where Ptolemy places the ending of the Mountains of the Moon. This river, much of which, in its crooked course, was seen by Mr. Stanley, he estimated to be about 370 miles in length. Uniting with another stream, as it approaches the Victoria Nyanza, it forms the Shimeeyu, which latter river is afterward augmented by the Duma, and becomes the largest affluent of the Victoria Nyanza.

If, as I apprehend, and as most geographers believe, the Albert Nyanza shall prove to be an independent lake, then Mr. Stanley will, in all probability, be the final discoverer of the ultimate source of the Nile, and have his name forever associated with the settlement of a question that has agitated the world for more than 2,000 years.

Chief Justice Daly concluded as follows: I cannot close without a comment on the remarkable achievement of Mr. Stanley in marching through an unknown country over 700 miles in 100 days, which would have occupied the ordinary Arab traders about nine months, and, according to the usual experience of African explorers, it might have taken two years. That he accomplished this feat under the severe trial of the loss of half his command by disease and the attacks of hostile savages is an achievement that will compare with

any thing in the history of exploration; and it is also specially worthy of notice that the expedition he so successfully carried through was not undertaken by a government or by a society, but was conceived, and the heavy expense of it borne, by the proprietors of the New York Herald and the London Telegraph. It is not only an event, but an era in journalism; for by the results obtained it has placed the whole world under obligation to the proprietors of these two great newspapers.

BAYARD TAYLOR'S SPEECH.

Mr. Bayard Taylor, being called for, spoke as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.—It gives me very great pleasure to be present on this occasion and to take a brief part in the proceedings. I have never been an explorer in any important sense of the word, and I have long since ceased to be even what is called a traveler; but I have never lost the keenest possible interest in geographical research, especially now, when every year brings us such rich returns. I think it most fitting that Mr. Stanley's recent achievements should be especially considered by the American Geographical Society. Our recognition and encouragement are none the less due since, in all probability, the report of them will not reach him before his heroic labors are over.

In regard to the main geographical problem as affected by his latest discoveries, it seems to me that there is no need of any further discussion. For my own part, I have never held any other view than that the sources of the Nile would be ultimately found among the high mountains in Eastern Africa, south of the equator. I must confess the grounds of my belief were not at all scientific, and I am quite ready to accept whatever ridicule may follow the suppression of them.

In the first place, I have always had the greatest faith in the correctness of ancient records. I believed in the trustworthiness of Herodotus, Strabo and Ptolemy, and placed the most implicit faith in all their statements, and when in the year 1849 or 1850 Krapf and Rebmann's discovery of the great snow mountains of Killmanjaro was made known to the world I had connected it in my imagination with the course of the White Nile as given in Werne's works, which had been published by the great German some years before. The lakes of Ptolemy were still an unknown region, covering eight degrees of latitude, intervening between the snows of Killmanjaro and the furthest point which had then been reached on the White

Nile. This connection was an illogical one, if you please, but I have never been able since to separate them. Early in 1851 Dr. Knob-
lecher, Catholic bishop apostolic for Central Africa, published in Ger-
many his account of the ascent of the White Nile in latitude eight
degrees north. His descriptions were so careful and evidently so
correct, and they revealed such an unexpected and wide field of Afri-
can travel, that when I found myself in Egypt before the close of the
same year I determined to devote the whole of the winter to reaching
as far a point on the White Nile as was possible with my limited
means. I had made no preparation in any sense for an actual journey
of exploration. Indeed, I was ready to turn back at any point when-
ever the difficulties of travel should become too great. But though
the difficulties of travel increased, we ascended the Bahr-et-Shazal
and reached the town of Khartoum, at the junction of the Blue and
the White Nile, where I met and made the acquaintance of Dr.
Knoblecher, two years before he died. I finally found myself float-
ing along the White Nile, carried along by a strong wind, southward,
at the rate of 100 miles a day. At that time this whole region was
unknown. Burton, Grant, Speke and Baker were then unknown to
the world, and there was so little knowledge of the region of Egypt
that my own attempt was looked upon there as something exceed-
ingly rash and dangerous. One day while I was drifting along the
current of that magnificent flood, with a curious baby hippopotamus
following the boat, as if trying to find out who and what we were, I
reflected as I looked down upon the water, "These waves were a
short time ago snows upon the peak of Kiligaro." I had no more
doubt in it than if I had seen with my own eyes the little rills trick-
ling through the cold ravines and gathering into the river below.
Then and there I wrote a poetical address to that grand mysterious
mountain, and I will take the liberty of reading to you the opening
lines:

Hail, thou monarch of African mountains,
Remote, inaccessible, silent and lone,
Who from the heart of the tropical fervor
Liftest to heaven thine alien snows;
Feeding forever the fountains that make thee
Father of Nile and Creator of Egypt.

(Applause.)

Of course there was not the slightest particle of scientific deduction
in all this; there was no logic; probably no common sense. It was
simply that imagination which takes the form of faith and which
firmly believes what it cannot prove. Having thus committed

myself, of course I have never allowed any later deduction to shake my position — (laughter) — and I am rather afraid that now at this time I rejoice more heartily over the final confirmation for the sake of poetry than I do for the sake of geography. Between four and five years after that, Speke and Baker discovered the lost lake of Ptolemy, and I am now entirely satisfied that Stanley has at last discovered the final concluding link and has connected the waters of Victoria Nyanza with the snow on the Mountains of the Moon. I think the stream which Stanley discovered flows into the Victoria Nyanza, and may possibly be the feeder of the lake. But I think we shall discover that the greater portion of the water is derived from those marshy lowlands on the east which must receive almost the entire drainage of the western slopes of the mountains.

As I said, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Knoblecher himself, who told me that he had been 13,000 feet above the sea, where they had been almost frozen to death under the Equator. From his description, as well as from other sources, I feel satisfied that this great mountain range contains at least four peaks above the snow, from 18,000 to 22,000 feet in height, at a distance of 150 to 200 miles from the Victoria Nyanza. Further explorations are necessary to make this a geographical certainty. I really need no further proof. Stanley's account of the eastern shore in his letters is quite sufficient for any imagination. I am entirely satisfied that he has discovered the true source of the Nile. The speaker added that when Stanley's first letters were published, and there was so much skepticism in regard to them, he was convinced of their truth from the fact that he spelled so many of his Arabic words improperly. He had evidently spelled them according to their sound, proving conclusively to the speaker that Stanley had caught them from the lips of the natives, and not always correctly. An imposter would never make such a mistake as that.

A letter from Paul du Chaillu was read, in which he expressed his regrets at not being able to be present, and also a glowing tribute to the genius and indomitable enterprise and perseverance of Stanley.

A series of maps, from the time of Ptolemy down to the present day, were then exhibited, and Dr. Wallis made a few remarks, when the meeting adjourned.